DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 273 914 CG 019 379

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TITLE A California K-Adult Counseling and Guidance Reform Proposal.
INSTITUTION California Association for Counseling and Development, Fullerton.
PUB DATE 85
NOTE 30p.; Prepared by the California Task Force on the Reform of Counseling and Guidance.
PUB TYPE Reports - General (140)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Adult Education; Adult Programs; *Counseling; *Curriculum Development; Elementary Secondary Education; *Guidance; *Individual Development; Postsecondary Education; *Program Development; Student Development
IDENTIFIERS *California

ABSTRACT

This document contains a proposal developed by a task force of counseling and guidance leaders to provide a common base from which to affect a reform in counseling and guidance in California. The proposal emphasizes the importance of comprehensive counseling and guidance planning. Sections on introduction, history, statement of purpose, and rationale and goals reform statement are included. The proposal focuses on student and process goals and on personal, social, educational, and career development. Six components are identified as essential to a counseling and guidance program if it is to be truly comprehensive, i.e., planning, coordination, a guidance curriculum, consultation, a positive school environment, and individual and group counseling. Position statements by experts in the counseling and guidance field are included to highlight current thinking on the topics of: (1) Importance of Developing a Comprehensive Counseling and Guidance Plan; (2) The Importance of Coordination; (3) A Guidance Curriculum; (4) Consultation; (5) A Positive School Environment; (6) Individual Counseling; (7) Group Counseling; (8) Elementary Counseling and Guidance; (9) Emphasis for a Middle School; (10) Implications for Secondary School Level; and (11) Counseling in Adult Education. Guidelines are also offered to assist reform leaders in gaining support for these reform efforts from specific audiences such as legislators, state department personnel, administrators, board members, counselors, and counselor educators. (NB)

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CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION FOR COUNSELING AND DEVELOPMENT

HANDBOOK

A CALIFORNIA K-ADULT COUNSELING AND GUIDANCE REFORM PROPOSAL

BY

THE CALIFORNIA TASK FORCE ON THE REFORM OF COUNSELING AND GUIDANCE

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PREFACE

The major educational reform movements in the United States and in California have focused on the pursuit of excellence and the improvement of academic programs in our schools. Little or no attention as to the importance of counseling and guidance in these movements has been written. The **California Kindergarten-Adult Counseling and Guidance Reform Proposal** has been developed to fill this gap.

The proposal emphasizes the importance of comprehensive counseling and guidance planning. In June of 1980, the State Board of Education affirmed the importance of counseling and guidance programs and established a high priority for them. The State Board also accepted a recommendation that schools and districts develop comprehensive guidance plans for meeting student needs. The State Board policy included specific reference to those who should be involved in the planning; parents, students, and community representatives are to participate with school people in developing plans.

A task force of counseling and guidance leaders has developed this document in an effort to provide a common base from which to affect a reform in counseling and guidance in California. This document is intended to serve as a discussion paper for those who are planning for reform and change.

The original **Rationale and Goals Reform Statement** which is contained in the early part of the document was reviewed and supported by the major guidance organizations:

ENDORSED

BY

- Office of School Climate, State Department of Education
- California Association for Counseling and Development (CACD)
- California School Counselors Association (CSCA)
- California Association of Counselor Educators and Supervisors (CACES)
- California Career Guidance Association (CCGA)
- The McDaniel Foundation, and
- The ACSA Committee on Pupil Services

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A CALIFORNIA K-ADULT COUNSELING AND GUIDANCE REFORM PROPOSAL

INTRODUCTION

Educational reform is a priority topic thanks to such publications as **A Nation at Risk** and **Action to Excellence: A Comprehensive Plan to Improve Our Nation's Schools.** Unfortunately, the more than thirty educational reform documents that have been written make little mention of the need for counseling and guidance reforms. This **California K-Adult Counseling and Guidance Reform Proposal** is a response to that omission. Its content is designed to inform administrators, legislators, and the public that all other educational reforms will have limited impact unless accompanied by counseling and guidance reforms. The proposal also provides a direction for developing or updating a comprehensive counseling and guidance program.

To win support for counseling and guidance reform efforts, selected experts in the field of counseling and guidance will be invited to prepare strategy papers directed at specific audiences, such as the legislatures, upper administration of the State Department of Education, counselor educators, administrators and members of boards of education. It is also anticipated that this proposal will be used at school and district levels for gaining support for new programs and as a program planning guide. The Reform Proposal will be reviewed and revised every few years to keep it current.

HISTORY OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROPOSAL

During September 1983, Dr. James Saum, Professor-Counselor Education, California State University, Sacramento, initiated the establishment of an ad hoc task force on behalf of the California Association of Counseling and Development. The charge was to develop a K-12 Counseling and Guidance Rationale and Goals Reform Statement. The purpose of the Reform Statement was to respond to the criticism by the public, legislature, school boards and administrators that the counseling community was **not** united in its direction and was **not** providing significant services. These groups have used these arguments to justify their lack of support for counseling and guidance.

The twelve-member task force met on three occasions between October 1983 and March 1984. The California K-12 Counseling and Guidance Rationale and Goals Reform Statement (incorporated into this document) was the result of those meetings.

In May 1984, Dr. Anne Upton, Director, Office of School Climate, State Department of Education, invited the original task force members, as well as other counseling and guidance leaders, to a two-day meeting. This expanded task force was reconvened in November 1984 by Dr. Joseph Cunha, newly appointed Director, Office of School Climate. At both meetings, the expanded task force reviewed and elaborated on the Reform Statement developed by the original task force. The result of their efforts was **A California K-Adult Counseling and Guidance Reform Proposal.**

STATEMENTS OF PURPOSE

The specific purposes of this California K-Adult Counseling and Guidance Proposal are to provide the following.

1. A Rationale and Goals Reform Statement endorsed by the major counseling and guidance organizations. This endorsement provides users with a document that "represents a united counseling and guidance community's thinking."

2. The information necessary to develop or update a comprehensive counseling and guidance program.

3. Position Statements by counseling and guidance leaders to be considered by those engaging in reform efforts. These Statements fall into two categories: 1) those that address the major counseling and guidance areas; i.e., comprehensive planning, coordination, guidance curriculum, consultation, school climate, individual and group counseling, and 2) those that address the appropriateness of this Proposal at the elementary, middle, secondary, and adult schools levels.

4. Guidelines to assist reform leaders in writing statements to gain support for this reform effort from specific audiences, such as legislators, State Department personnel, administrators, board members, counselor educators and counselors.

RATIONALE AND GOALS REFORM STATEMENT

Introduction

School counseling and guidance services are faced with the necessity of identifying and devising realistic strategies for helping students confront a multitude of societal and educational issues. The needs of students in these areas are documented in many studies including those listed on the reference page. However, a review of the school effectiveness and S.B. 813 educational reform efforts shows that student needs are not being addressed in a comprehensive fashion. It is therefore, the recommendation of this Proposal that educational and political decision makers expand the current education reform efforts to incorporate comprehensive school counseling and guidance reforms, including credentialed school counselors.

The Effects of Social Change

Today's students are seriously affected by accelerating rates of change. While such change offers them opportunities such as new career and educational alternatives, it also creates stress because of changing national values, family structures and the world of work. Students must deal with threats of nuclear war and with economic problems such as inflation. Demographic shifts, including more immigrants and new ethnic groups, such as the culturally and linguistically different, are also cause for concern. At the same time, the media often encourages unrealistic expectations; i.e., instant solutions.

The stresses that students experience because of societal changes often translate into feelings of uncertainty, anxiety, fear, frustration, anger, and hopelessness. As a result, many students withdraw, avoid responsibility, perform acts of vandalism or violence, abuse drugs and alcohol, and even become suicidal. Many have high absenteeism and are incapable of developing educational or career goals. Some educational and political leaders advocate that schools should **not** continue to involve themselves with societal matters. However, there is sufficient evidence that students are affected by a number of societal events. When these events interfere with the student's ability to learn, the school must offer corrective action.

Educational Needs

As indicated above, changes in society provide students with a multiplicity of choices and, consequently, a number of opportunities; however, the confusion that often results causes many students to feel disoriented. In addition, those students who, for a variety of possible reasons, are functional illiterates obviously do not have the skills needed to achieve in any meaningful way. Underachieving students often participate in mediocre courses and programs. While the growing demand by the public for "high" standards motivates some students, others find it threatening and become anxious or frustrated. Students are responding in increasing numbers to these various circumstances by lessening their study efforts or by dropping out of school. The fact that lifelong learning is a prerequisite to living in a rapidly changing world of high technology requires students to develop certain attitudes and skills. Thus, students need some types of assistance that are not typically offered by an administrator or a teacher.

To summarize, students need direction and support in this volatile society if they are to be truly educated. Some students require special, developmental assistance. Where and how will all these needs be met? The answer is a reformed, comprehensive school counseling and guidance program, including credentialed school counselors. Such a program has the goals, identified below, that are capable of addressing the educational, career, personal and social needs of students. The type of reform effort necessary will require that administrators, teachers, counselors, parents and others assume more varied roles.

Recommended K-Adult Counseling and Guidance Goals

Student Goals

1. **Provide students information, planning and monitoring services which include:**
   - Providing them as well as their parents with information in such areas as graduation requirements and educational alternatives
   - Helping them to learn who they are (aptitudes, interests, skills values)
   - Helping them with their educational and career planning.
   - Identifying those who need special assistance (e.g., emotional, attendance problems)
   - Assisting and/or referring the identified students to appropriate school and community resources
   - Monitoring the students' academic, attendance and behavioral progress and assisting and/or referring those who need special help to the appropriate resources

2. **Assist students to deal effectively with societal and educational changes by developing:**
   - Learning and study skills
   - Self-help skills
   - Communication skills
   - Interpersonal skills
   - A sense of responsibility
   - Decision making skills
   - Attitude and skills needed for lifelong career development
   - Future planning skills

Process Goals

3. **Assist with the development of a school climate conducive to learning by:**
   - Providing school orientation programs for students and parents
   - Helping staff to develop schoolwide academic, attendance, safety and discipline standards
   - Developing open communication between and among faculty, students and parents
   - Providing problem-solving assistance for the staff and parents
   - Involving administrators, teachers, aides, volunteers (including parents) in guidance efforts and providing them with the necessary training
   - Developing a balanced curriculum so that students will have choices and will be challenged.

4. **Improve counseling and guidance services by:**
   - Involving the total school community in guidance efforts
   - Modifying the counseling and guidance delivery systems
   - Integrating selected guidance services into the curriculum
   - Recognizing that education is broader than schooling and is lifelong
   - Providing truly comprehensive, post-high school planning assistance

Note: Goals are not listed in order of priority.

COMPONENTS OF A COMPREHENSIVE COUNSELING AND GUIDANCE PROGRAM

As indicated in the above section, goals addressing the career, personal, educational and social needs of students can be realized through a comprehensive counseling and guidance program. To be truly comprehensive, such a program must include the following components:

1. Comprehensive planning
2. Coordination
3. A guidance curriculum
4. Consultation
5. A positive school climate
6. Counseling, both individual and group

(Note: The capital letters in parenthesis at the end of the counseling and guidance activites described in this section indicate the persons primarily responsible. More than one letter after an activity indicates that the primary responsibility may be assigned to any of these or to more than one person as a joint effort. It is a given that if counselors are not indicated, they have a secondary role. Key: A—aide; C—counselor; PA—parent; HC—head counselor; S—student; T—teacher; P—principal; V—volunteer.)

Comprehensive Planning

Planning can be accomplished in many ways. Most planning models include the same basic steps and differ procedurally only in minor ways and in the language and terminology used.

In developing a comprehensive guidance program, it is important to gain the acceptance and active support of all those involved — guidance specialists, teachers, students, parents, and others. One way to do this is to involve as many persons as possible through systematic planning.

However a school community organizes its improvement process, the content areas of the guidance program should be clearly described. These content areas are then used for defining student needs, for defining student goals, and for evaluating the effectiveness of the program in operation.

A systematic approach provides the planners with a plan for **what** they want to achieve, **how** they will achieve it, and **who** will help achieve it. The systematic approach is a process involving four phases of program development—planning, structuring (designing), implementing, and evaluating—as well as the activities related to those phases.

Prior to gathering data, planners will wish to state the basic philosophy and underlying accumptions upon which the guidance program will be based. The philosophy states the fundamental reasons for the program being the way it will be. The assumptions are the set of principles that all the staff agree will guide the program activities. The philosophy and assumptions will be helpful in developing goals, objectives and services.

As the program is planned, structured and implemented, school staffs should consider the following seven steps:

1. Devise an evaluation design
2. Determine student needs
3. Establish the goals
4. Write the objectives
5. Select, schedule, and assist personnel to provide services and activities designed to help students reach the objectives
6. Develop skills of staff when necessary
7. Evaluate the program, make necessary changes, report the results

Coordination of School/Community Resources for Students

The coordination of school and community resources for students is an essential component of any counseling and guidance reform effort. Developed at the initial stage of the development of a counseling and guidance program, the coordination component requires three types of activities: developmental, informational, and exploratory.

Developmental Activities

These activities require the following:

- A school guidance committee (HC)
- A team approach using administrators, teachers, aides, peers (students), business and industry personnel, community agencies personnel, parents, college interns (HC, P)
- Cooperation among related school programs (HC, P)
- Program development, implementation, and evaluation efforts (needs assessment, planning, organizing, implementing, monitoring, evaluating, and publicity) (HC)
- Analysis and utilization of district and community resources (HC, C, A, V, P, T)

Informational Activities

These efforts are required to:

- Determine students needs (C)
- Identify and/or develop information resources (C, A, V)
- Evaluate uses of information (C)
- Choose the most effective delivery systems, which include:

  newsletters (A, S, T, V)
  handbooks (A, S, T, V)
  topical papers, i.e., scholarships (A, C, V)
  college and/or training program catalogues (A, V)
  military brochures (A, V)
  career search manuals, i.e., resumes, interview tips (A)
  job descriptions (A)
  computer data on each student's progress (C)
  community resource directories (C)
  business, college, military representative presentations (A)
  college nights (A, V)
  orientation programs (A, V)
  parent nights (P, S, V)

Exploratory Activities

These efforts are required to:

- Determine student needs (C)
- Identify and develop resources (A, V, T)
- Evaluate usage (S, V)
- Analyze people and/or sites to ensure that student assignments are appropriate (A, V, S, T)
- Make work-experience assignments (T, A)
- Make student-volunteer assignments (T, A, V)
- Provide for business/industry "shadowing" (V, A)
- Provide for business/industry interviews and visits (V, A)

A Guidance Curriculum

A guidance curriculum is essential to students' development. It provides instructional and preventive experiences that focus on the affective domain but are infused throughout the total school curriculum. A guidance curriculum addresses the personal, social, educational and career development objectives, providing students an economical way to develop skills in these areas.

Suggested Emphases

Following are the suggested emphases for providing instruction, group discussion and practice activities in personal and social development (life coping skills) to students:

- The acceptability of seeking help (C, T)
- Techniques for seeking help (C, T)

- Finding and using resources that provide help (C, T)
- Importance of interpersonal relationship skills (C, T)
- Practicing desirable interpersonal relationship skills (C, T)
- Importance of developing problem solving skills (C, T)
- Practicing problem-solving skills (C, T)
- Developing critical-thinking skills throughout the curriculum (HC, P)

Suggested Activities

Following are suggested activities for providing educational and career development assistance to students:

- Administer, interpret tests (C)
- Determine and discuss their interests, aptitudes, values, learning styles (C)
- Disseminate and discuss information in such areas as graduation requirements, alternative educational approaches, colleges, training programs, military opportunities, technological impacts, financial aid data, career clusters; refer to career resource centers fo rassigned studies; i.e., jobs in a career cluster area (A)
- Teach decision-making skills units (C, T)
- Discuss need for lifelong learning (T)
- Assist in developing six-year plans, giving students major responsibility for their plans (C)

Consultation

Providing consultation means helping administrators, teachers, parents, volunteers, students and aides to design and apply preventive actions that will improve students' educational, career, personal and social development.

Following are some suggested activities:

- Encourage administrators to support counseling and guidance activities; e.g., improved school climate efforts, a guidance curriculum, computers for counselors (C)
- Provide teachers with information, planning assistance, consultation and training so that they can present or assist with guidance curriculum presentations (C)
- Instruct teachers how to identify and refer students having academic, personal or social problems (C)
- Advise parents how to help their children succeed, how to secure outside help for their children if they have special problems, and how to help develop or present a guidance activity such as parent night (C)
- Train, assign, monitor and evaluate those students who serve as peer counselors (C)

A Positive School Climate

This component focuses on the environmental factors related to student learning by emphasizing school/community interaction and by applying organizational change strategies.

It is suggested that this component emphasize the following two sets of activities:

1. Development and implementation of a plan to improve school morale by:
   - Assisting in efforts to improve communication between administration, teachers, parents, and students (C)
   - Developing a balanced curriculum (P, HC)
   - Helping students to identify their learning styles (C, T)
   - Encouraging special instructional assistance efforts for students (C)
   - Providing group counseling for students having special problems (C)

2. Development and implementation of a comprehensive plan that includes:
   - A school policy for school safety, discipline and student attendance (P)
   - A dropout prevention program that includes diagnosis of learning problems and alternative learning programs (P, HC)
   - A school attendance review board (P)
   - A local school attendance review team and child study team (P, C)
   - Related interagency efforts (C)
   - A re-entry process for students from juvenile hall (C)
   - A system for monitoring students' progress (T, C)
   - A process for referring students who need special assistance (C)

Counseling—Individual and Group

It is suggested that the counseling component be based on four essential considerations: personal, social, educational, and career development.

Personal Development

Counselors help students to:

- Develop positive self-concepts
- Accept responsibility
- Develop attitudes and actions necessary to achieve in school
- Avoid being physically or verbally abused
- Avoid being sexually abused
- Avoid pregnancy
- Avoid suicide

Social Development

Counselors help students to:

- Develop feelings of adequacy in relation to others
- Learn ways to resolve interpersonal problems

- Establish sound family relations
- Establish good peer relationships
- Establish effective relations with their teachers and administrators
- Develop a respect for individual differences in attitude, values and backgrounds

Educational Development

Counselors help students to:

- use their learning opportunities in effective ways
- Develop educational plans that relate to their interests, aptitudes, achievements, values and needs

Career Development

Counselors help students to:

- Develop positive attitudes toward work
- Develop awareness of career opportunities and options
- Develop awareness of how their interests, values, aptitudes, achievements and needs relate to career areas and jobs.

The counseling component provides special assistance to students identified through referral by administrators, teachers, parents, and students themselves and by attending record reviews and group counseling records.

Students are assisted by a variety of counseling activities, including:

- Individual counseling
- Group counseling
- Peer counseling
- Parent conferences
- Conflict-resolution groups
- Child (student) study teams

Counselors refer students to appropriate community agencies by:

- Meeting with personnel from community agencies on a regular basis
- Developing strategies for identifying and referring students to the agencies

The counseling and guidance services described above require much time and energy; therefore, school staffs must establish counseling priorities and develop alternative ways of providing some of these services. For example, crisis counseling might be accomplished primarily through referral to outside agencies.

POSITION STATEMENTS
Introduction

The Position Statements on the following pages were prepared by California counseling and guidance leaders. They fall into two categories: (1) those that address each of the counseling and guidance components described in the preceding section of this proposal (i.e., comprehensive planning, coordination, a guidance curriculum, consultation, a positive school climate, and counseling—individual and group) and, (2) those that address the appropriateness of this Proposal at the elementary, middle, secondary and adult school levels.

These Position Statements are included so that reform leaders will either incorporate significant current thinking into their reform efforts or develop a rationale for **not** acting on current thinking. In short, reform leaders are urged to read, to consider, to discuss and, most important, to act on these recommendations in an effort to achieve effective counseling and guidance reforms.

The Importance of Developing a Comprehensive Counseling and Guidance Plan

Comprehensive counseling and guidance program planning is a stimulating and exhilarating process for educators because it rests on the active participation of everyone involved—counselors, teachers, administrators, paraprofessionals, volunteers, students, school nurses, librarians, parents and all other community members. A comprehensive counseling and guidance program allows counselors and teachers to develop new approaches to the cognitive and affective education of students. A total school involvement means sharing of responsibilities and expertise. This proposal effectively points out the primary role of comprehensive counseling and guidance in today's school setting.

Increased understanding of the counselor's role and function is paramount if schools are to provide students with the assistance they need to survive present and future role adjustments in their lives. Our students need the capability to respond positively to everyday events in a world that is constantly changing. This proposal identifies some of the important needs of students and presents the counselor's task in clear perspective.

The Proposal clearly shows that school counselors accept the responsibility of providing students assistance in the areas of personal and social growth as well as in the areas of career and educational planning. It proposes that part of the solution for improved understanding of the role and function of the counselor is the establishment in schools and school districts comprehensive counseling and guidance programs, K-Adult. It is recognized, however, that each local plan must be determined on local priorities, needs, and resources.

This Proposal provides a vehicle not only for meeting the needs of special populations, but also for meeting the personal, social, educational and career needs of all students.

Mackie J. Jeffus, President
California School Counselors Association

The Importance of Coordination

Each child has needs different from another. Each seeks solutions to problems, issues, and concerns that are both unique to himself or herself and, at times, held in common with others who are at similar stages of development. No one person within a child's environment can provide all the appropriate solutions to his or her problems or concerns. Parents and other immediate family members have the most influence on the child and exert the greatest effort. Peers, teachers, neighbors, and other community members also contribute to the continuing development of the child. However, no one individual is able to provide total assistance to the child who is facing unique personal problems or concerns.

The answer lies in effective coordination of both human and material resources. The school counselor can provide the necessary coordination to bring together these diverse resources to provide assistance to students. The counselor has knowledge about and access to information and services that each child needs in growing up and becoming a mature adult in a changing world. If a counselor were able to provide only one function within the school (providing that the number of students per counselor was so overwhelming that there was insufficient time to offer each student individual assistance), coordinating critically needed services and providing essential information would have to assume the highest priority.

Effective coordination begins within the school through the provision of a variety of resources and extends beyond the school to involve business and industry, colleges and universities, agencies and people of all walks of life. Knowing about and having access to extensive information and a vast array of services, and using these at the most propitious time in the life of a student, is a critical component of a successful guidance program. Effective coordination requires the ability to link students with all of those resources that will help them to make important decisions about their lives now and in the future. Effective coordination is the foundation for excellence in a school's guidance program.

Donald G. Hays
Fullerton Union High School District

A Guidance Curriculum

The age of guidance curriculum is here. Counseling and guidance staff have met the challenge of integrating services, goals, and objectives with a clear professional vision. They are both clarifying their role and defining the program that students, parents, staff, and the community can expect.

The concept of guidance curriculum implies several necessary components. These include: defined program, counselor role clarification, identified students needs, developmental rendering of services, and a systematic process of monitoring and evaluation of curriculum. The overriding goal is to identify student needs by grade level, to render services to meet those needs, to evaluate program success, and to implement needed modification.

Counselors must assume a leadership role as a member of the instructional team. Counselors have a curriculum as important as any other curricular offering—perhaps even more important. Their instructional impact spans the lives of their clients—a lifetime of planning. It includes nothing short of decision making, career and educational planning, lifestyle and personal satisfaction, leisure time and occupational role.

California has successfully developed several exemplary guidance models founded on a curricular base. These models are responsive to the expressed needs of the entire community. Students in these programs are reacting with enthusiasm and personal involvement to a curriculum that develops lifelong planning skills to deal with a changing future. At the same time, teachers and administrators are providing support and respect for these instructionally sound programs. Finally, community support has increased as the perception of counselor role and program has been clarified to assist all students.

Several key outcomes surface with the curricular approach:

- **Every** student can expect equal access and equal opportunity to benefit from the curriculum.
- The vital **contribution** made by counselors is defined.
- **Instructional status** is rightfully assigned to the guidance program.
- **Team work** among staff is stimulated
- Community **support** is rallied for a defined program.

These five outcomes need to be supported by an active guidance education program for the entire educational community. Counselors and guidance staff must direct adequate time for an active public relations effort to feature the valuable contribution a curricular program provides for students and the community. We are a part of an exciting and challenging time. The leadership can be yours for the taking!

Sharon Paul, Coordinator
Career Guidance and Educational Resource
Orange County Department of Education

Consultation

Consultation is not a new concept in the area of counseling and guidance. Various consultation roles, whether or not the title was used, have been performed by counselors in recent years. A review of guidance reform materials demonstrated the growing importance of consultation.

Counselors continue to be assigned more and varied responsibilities, particularly at the secondary school level. This fact limits what counselors can do directly for students either on a one-to-one or a group basis. And yet, as this reform document demonstrates, many of the needs of students identified in the past continue to be major needs; e.g., educational-career planning. In addition, new student needs are developing. Because of high technology and rapid change, for instance, students must learn life skills (e.g., conflict resolution skills). Crises problems such as drug abuse indicate the need for more preventive efforts. Students are requiring more and more assistance at a time when counseling services are being cut back or limited.

How can such assistance be provided? A major answer is for counselors to assist others in a consultant capacity so that they, too, can help students to grow. Who are those "others"? They are administrators, teachers, aides, parents, students, and volunteers. Counselors as consultants can help these persons develop roles that address the needs of the students at their schools. Counselors as consultants can assist these persons to plan and serve as trainers, resource persons, models, facilitators, monitors and evaluators in order to ensure that they successfully serve students.

Counselors serving as consultants provide a cost effective, significant service that affects many students. Counselors as consultants will multiply the effectiveness of the helping relationship by increasing the number of people assisting students' growth. It is, therefore, recommended that counselors allocate a significant portion of their time to learning and practicing consultant skills.

I. Thomas Quinn
Director, Pupil Personnel Services
San Mateo County Office of Education

A Positive School Climate

The major goals of the educational reform effort currently underway in California are to improve the academic performance of students; to increase students' understanding of their physical, social, political, and ethical worlds; and to help students develop character and responsibility. To achieve these goals, the instructional program must include components designed to improve school climate and the classroom learning environment.

Definition of School Climate

School climate is defined as those qualities of the school that affect how people feel while they are there. These qualities affect everyone—students, teachers, staff, administrators, parents, and visitors. They include such positive factors as respect, trust, morale, opportunities, input, growth, cohesiveness, renewal, and caring.

School climate is also defined as those factors in school life that influence behavior. These include such things as how people work together to solve problems or make decisions about how the school operates; how authority and status are distributed; the degree to which students feel they belong; how rules are stated, understood, and enforced; the formal curriculum and style of instruction; how personal problems are handled; relationships with parents and the community; and the appearance, organization, and use of the buildings and grounds, and the freedom from fear.

Characteristics of Positive School Climate

Schools with positive school climates are places where even low-achieving students are respected. Students feel that teachers are "on their side," and they count on teachers to listen and be fair. Students are enthusiastic about learning and miss school only for good reasons.

In schools with good climate, teachers are proud of their school and its students. Teachers treat pupils as persons and they trust students to use good judgment. Teachers from one subject area or grade level respect those from others, and teachers are proud to be teachers. The principals in such schools effectively represent the needs and interests of their school to the superintendent and school board. Parents are seen as important partners. They tend to rise to defend the school's program.

In most schools with positive climates, important decisions are made by a governing council representing students, teachers, administrators, and staff. People feel their ideas are heard and used. Before important program decisions are made, people hear about them and are involved in some of the discussion. Everyone feels that he or she has input into most decisions and "really counts." People share their concerns openly with each other even though they don't always agree. And people like working there.

The Importance of Positive School Climate

Leaders in the field of school climate improvement have noted that schools with positive climates are characterized by beliefs, values, policies, procedures, rules, and regulations that are people-centered. They are "student advocates." Their major goal is to help students grow and develop. Conversely, schools with negative climates tend to be more institutional-centered. They are "system advocates." The major mission of these schools is to tell people what to do.

Why School Counselors Should Be Involved

There are several reasons why school counselors should become leaders in the improvement of school climate. The professional background of the school counselor makes that person ideally suited for this endeavor. No additional training or experience is required. No equipment is needed other than the basic skills that school counselors already possess.

Perhaps the most valid reason is found in the abundant evidence that as the climate of a school improves, many symptoms of alienation tend to disappear. We now know how to measure climate, how to change it, and how to report what happens. Our guidance reform and school improvement efforts can now be focused on the causes rather than the symptoms of student and staff alienation.

Milton P. Wilson
Office of School Climate
State Department of Education

Individual Counseling

In the past several years as school budgets became tighter and counseling services came under the microscope, one of the first "frills" to be deemed expendable was personal counseling, followed closely by individual counseling. The two, by definition, are intertwined and absolutely essential ingredients in any comprehensive school counseling and guidance program if it is to have relevance to the student body it serves.

Individual counseling in its simplest terms is the interaction that takes place when a student comes to a trained professional school counselor to discuss a significant personal problem. The problem is discussed in a confidential setting in an open, accepting atmosphere with the counselor using experience, knowledge and acquired skills to facilitate the student's understanding of the problem as well as the strategies that may be used to cope with or alleviate the problem.

Much has been written about the traumas and pressures associated with puberty and adolescence and their effects on the psyche and self-image. Students going through any school system, be it elementary, middle or secondary, are personalities in transition. Each student is different with a unique set of perceptions, values, attitudes and pressures that impact on performance as measured by schools. It is critical that there be some place in the system where this individuality is respected.

The mission of the school is to educate and acculturate large groups of students; therefore, by its very nature, it is not equipped to devote any great attention to the individual and his concerns. Where, then, is the individual to turn when the world presses in, when the pressures and concerns are too personal to be discussed with family or peers?

Through the individual counseling experience, students are aware that someone cares enough about them as individuals to listen to their problems. There are no judgments, no fingers pointed, but rather an acceptance of the students as persons and an acceptance of their concerns as real to them. They will leave the counseling encounter with a stronger sense of themselves as persons of worth, with a renewed confidence in their ability to cope.

Counselors who provide individual counseling to students make a significant contribution to the essential goal of the school by providing a service that allows students an avenue for solving the myriad problems and concerns that inhibit the free, full realization of their potential.

Robert Godinez, Counselor
Chaffey High School

Group Counseling

A school-wide group counseling program is a highly effective approach to delivering many of the student-oriented services identified in this **California K-Adult Counseling and Guidance Reform Proposal.** With the rise in counselor-student ratios and the increased demands placed on the school counseling staff, it is becoming more difficult to provide for the personal growth and development of the student. By involving every student in a group that meets periodically throughout the school year, the counselor has the opportunity to address such critical issues as positive self-image development, communication skills, interpersonal relations, family disruptions, substance abuse, truancy, and loss.

Group counseling provides a number of opportunities for students to identify and work with personal problems, to develop trust in and establish rapport with the counselor. Through the group process students are able to help one another solve problems in a meaningful and realistic manner. They are given the opportunity to examine their feelings and attitudes in a supportive environment. The group members feel a sense of belonging and develop tolerance and respect for others and themselves. Meeting with the students in a group is an ideal means for the counselor to identify those students who may require additional assistance through individual counseling or community agency intervention.

The group counseling approach is appropriate for every grade level. The discussion topics and areas of concern may be different, but the benefits remain the same. By incorporating group counseling into a comprehensive counseling and guidance program, the counselor is ensuring that the personal and social development of the individual is attended to and that the unique needs of the student population are addressed.

Tery Susman, Counselor
Bayside Middle School, San Mateo

Elementary Counseling and Guidance

> The child's classroom is as expansive or narrow as the environment which is utilized in the teaching-learning process. The classroom, if it is to meet the children's needs must cultivate their independence, individuality, freedom, spontaniety, and originality.
>
> — White House Conference Report, 1970

Research supports the contention that what happens in the learning process to elementary school children during the early years of development will have a marked effect on their coping behaviors in their adult lives. Elementary school counseling and guidance programs address the unique nature of children. These programs address the necessity of meeting individual needs and the importance of providing a humanistic, child-centered learning environment.

Guidance is a developmental continuum. It is for all children at all ages and stages in their development. It views all children as unique in ther own right, possessing worth, dignity and caring. While it is true that teachers play an important role in devoloping healthy competent individuals, they cannot do the job alone. The majority of teachers are not trained mental health specialists and many not always recognize personal needs, problems and outside influences that are a natural part of a child's life. Instead, the teacher approaches the child primarily from the cognitive domain.

Elementary school counseling and guidance is a specialized field of education requiring extensive training and education beyond the bachelor's degree. The elementary counselor is trained and has knowledge and understanding in the areas of child growth and development, human learning, group dynamics, self-image and concept development. The elementary counselor has the necessary skills and expertise to assist teachers, administrators and parents in addressing the total needs of children. The counselor is a vital part of the school team and coordinates the team planning and implementation of the total educational program for the children as well as making referrals to other support personnel and community resources.

Children who are experiencing personal problems and are under stress do not realize their learning potential in the classroom. Effective counseling and guidance programs at the elementary level create learning environments that encourage children to understand themselves, to develop satisfying peer relationships, to accept personal responsibility and accountability for their own behavior and, in doing so, to be ready for the world of work, education and decision making as they enter their adult lives. Counselors are an essential component of the total educational program and have a specialized place in today's school by contributing to the quality and ultimate goal of excellence in the academic arena.

"The central function of elementary guidance is to enhance and to improve the learning environment of the school so that each pupil in the elementary school has an opportunity to learn to the best of his capacity." (Munson, H. L., **Elementary School Guidance, Concepts, Dimensions and Practices.** Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1970, 38.)

John M. Hall, Counselor
Los Angeles City Unified School District

Emphasis for a Middle School

A comprehensive counseling and guidance program at the middle school level must have as its primary focus the personal and social development of the emerging adolescent. During the three years that a student attends middle school, he/she is acutely involved in the process of making the transition from childhood to adulthood, developing a sense of self, and attempting to gain a measure of control over his/her existence. These are often volatile and confusing times, not only for the student but for parents and school personnel as well. Therefore, a middle school counseling and guidance program must be designed to address the unique needs of this student population and to provide the guidance and support necessary to ease this transition from childhood to adulthood.

The **California K-Adult Counseling and Guidance Reform Proposal** offers the middle school counselor a variety of strategies that can be incorporated into a comprehensive program emphasizing the personal and social development of the emerging adolescent. Some of the effective methods of delivering counseling and guidance services at this level are individual and group counseling; consultation with parents; teachers and administrators classroom presentations; and initiating referrals to appropriate community agencies. These methods allow the counselor to work together with the students, parents, and school personnel to provide an environment for successful personal and social growth and to enhance the opportunity for optimal learning to take place.

Tery Susman, Counselor
Bayside Middle School, San Mateo

Implications for Secondary School Level

The **California K-Adult Counseling and Guidance Reform Proposal focuses** on the premise that the success of a comprehensive guidance program depends upon the active participation of everyone involved—guidance specialists, teachers, administrators, paraprofessionals, volunteers, parents and other community members. A comprehensive guidance program is designed **not** to put an additional burden on guidance specialists and teachers but to allow them to develop new and exciting approaches to the cognitive and affective education of students. The secondary school counselor has an opportunity to provide leadership in this area.

Total school involvement means a sharing of responsibilities and expertise. The traditional role of the secondary school counselor will need to be re-examined in terms of its effectiveness in a comprehensive system. Shared responsibility will allow counselors more time to utilize their talents in a variety of new modes; e.g., as coordinators, consultants, and change agents. The change in role will require the competence and knowledge to help students in their personal, social, career, and educational development; knowledge and skills to coordinate the activities of other helpers; knowledge and skills to plan, implement, and evaluate comprehensive guidance programs, activities and services; and knowledge and skills to link with other comprehensive guidance programs and services available in the community.

The secondary school counselor has an opportunity to provide leadership in the infusion of guidance and counseling principles into the new curricula reform movement. The counselor has an opportunity to employ a variety of strategies needed to develop and implement an improved guidance and counseling program. These strategies include such programs as group counseling, group guidance, peer counseling, student advisement and the use of computerized guidance systems.

The secondary school counselor will need to make use of all available resources in order to make the program work. Resources from the state, county and district will need to be marshaled and utilized. Funding sources such as vocational education, special education and Senate Bill 813 need to be made available for this effort.

The demand for a more rigorous and demanding program of studies for our secondary youth will require the kinds of professional assistance to students that trained, credentialed counselors can provide. The demands of rapidly changing technology will provide secondary counselors with a challenge to help students find a place in the world of work that best meets their potential for a positive contribution to society.

Joseph E. Cunha
State Department of Education

Counseling in Adult Education

Counseling in Adult Education has a number of priorities: For one thing, volunteer learning is stressed. It is not so much what "we" do for "them" but more an opening of the system that allows for student aspirations and the freedom for them to make realistic choices for their learning and for their lives. Counseling at the Adult Education level also encourages life-long learning, based on the belief that a holistic approach to learning can give healing to our society.

Adult Education counseling provides proper placement. Pre-classroom evaluation is nonjudgmental and allows the student to enroll in the appropriate curriculum, ranging from preliterate instruction (a common problem) to the higher levels of reading and math (e.g., high school diploma, GED, power reading, algebra). Counseling for adults has given an increased awareness of opportunities in labor and industry. Vocational education or entry level skills training is an important service to parolees, youngsters, people in career planning changes and others.

The **California K-Adult Counseling and Guidance Proposal** can be used by inservice K-Adult counselors to ensure unity of guidance services for all ages and to assist in gathering legislative support for counseling needy adult students.

Spence McIntyre
Los Angeles Unified School District

GUIDELINES FOR GAINING THE SUPPORT OF SPECIAL AUDIENCES

Following are some guidelines to be used by reform leaders in their efforts to gain the support of special audiences such as legislators, members of the State Department of Education, administrators, boards of education members, counselors and counselor-educators.

Legislatures

The following guidelines should be used by reform leaders when preparing strategy papers directed at members of legislatures:

- Be brief, one to two pages.
- Write in legislative language (i.e., use CSCA brochure language).
- Begin with the strongest point.
- Center the writing on student problems (e.g., dropouts, suicides).
- Show that the proposed reforms are cost-effective (e.g., compare a counselor's yearly salary to the cost of placing a juvenile in detention for one year).

As well as seeking legislator support through strategy papers, reform leaders should make personal contact wtih legislators.

State Department of Education

Following are the procedures and emphases for gaining support from the Department of Education.

1. Develop a two- or three-page paper that clearly shows the relationship of the Proposal to the general instructional/curricular program. Emphasis should be on quality indicators. Select one or two objectives or strategies for each of the six components of the model that can be translated into student or process goals, which, in turn, translate into identified quality indicators. Include a visual depiction of these relationships so that they can be easily understood.

2. Present the paper to State Department administrators.

Administrators/Boards of Education

Five process strategies are important in gaining the support of administrators, members of boards of education and parents.

1. Write a brief, one to two page statement.

2. Begin the statement with broad, powerful student outcomes, for example:
   - Teach students to be responsible learners
   - Assist students to develop positive self-concepts
   - Reduce dropouts

3. Include examples of role definitions.

4. Since administrators must make decisions with or without this document, it is **important** that the writer do the following:
   - Emphasize the importance of being cost effective in some areas (e.g., having aides perform a task) so that more priority services can be offered.
   - Emphasize the necessity for setting counseling and guidance priorities before deciding how to spend the available money.
5. Distribute this Proposal to administrators, board members, parents.

Counselors

When enlisting the support of counselors, distribute this Proposal since it is intended for a counselor audience. Include a cover letter that emphasizes the important features of the Proposal and the comprehensive counseling and guidance program that it describes. The important features include:

- Developed by professional working counselors
- Provides a basis for counseling legislation
- Provides a vehicle for acquiring increased funds for counseling
- Provides a document in which counselors define their own role and function
- Broadens and legitimizes the role of the counselor
- Provides opportunity for increased professional development
- Presents an organized format for delivery of services
- Provides for use of differentiated staffing for delivery of services
- Provides for a program whose delivery system is "counselor oriented"
- Clearly defines the counselors' areas of accountability

Counselor Educators

To gain the support of counselor educators, make effective use of this Proposal, presenting it at CACES conferences and state counselor educator meetings. Such presentations should promote the following:

- That counselors of the future must have training in the six component areas to be employable
- That counselor educators must re-examine their curriculum
- That counselor educators **must** continue to develop and refine their skills and expertise for training counselors; i.e., the importance of continuing education of counselor educators

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Educational reform efforts are being made at national, state, and local levels. California S.B. 813 offers specific directions, including a tenth-grade counseling proposal. However, comprehensive counseling and guidance reforms have **not** been recommended. This Proposal is in response to that omission. It recommends that educational and political decision makers expand the current education reform efforts to include comprehensive school counseling and guidance reforms, including credentialed school counselors. The personal, social, educational and career needs of students require the kinds of professional assistance that credentialed school counselors can provide. All other educational reforms will have little impact unless accompanied by counseling and guidance reforms.

This Proposal also offers a direction for counseling and guidance reform. It focuses on student and process goals and on personal, social, educational and career development. Six components are identified as essential to a counseling and guidance program if it is to be truly comprehensive; i.e., planning, coordination, a guidance curriculum, consultation, a positive school environment, counseling—individual and group. Although the counseling and guidance activities the Proposal describes are both preventive and crises oriented, they stress the preventive.

Position statements by experts in the counseling and guidance field are included to highlight current thinking on the six major components and on the relevancy of this Proposal to the elementary, middle, secondary and adult school levels. Guidelines are also offered to assist reform leaders in gaining support for these reform efforts from specific audiences such as legislators, State Department personnel, administrators, board members, counselors and counselor educators.

Although this Proposal is designed to serve as a guideline for initiating and implementing counseling and guidance reform efforts, school staffs must carefully establish priorities within their financial, personnel and time constraints in order to guarantee selected, specific services.

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